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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE LITERARY

NORM SYSTEMS OF GRADE 12 STUDENTS IN EDMONTON

by

Hangson B. Kazinga Msiska

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for accpetance, a thesis entitled, A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE LITERARY NORM SYSTEMS OF GRADE 12 STUDENTS IN EDMONTON. submitted by Hangson B. Kazinga Msiska in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my mother, Dairess Nyauhango and my father, Burnett Kazinga Msiska who first led me into the path of knowledge.

ABSTRACT

The dissertation investigated the literary tastes and norm-systems of grade 12 students who attend academic and "trades-oriented" schools in Edmonton, Canada. The investigation was conducted with the view that literature is a social institution constituted of the dialectical interrelationship amongst the domains of production, distribution and consumption.

The analysis of the data by statistical computations indicated that there are no differences in literary taste between the two types of schools. Even though there are some differences in the norm systems of the two types of schools the differences are not significant. It was also found out that the two sexes represented in the sample had the same literary taste and that their norm systems were not significantly different.

The dissertation also points to problems for future research.

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CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARIES: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

The Statement of the Problem

This study proposes to identify and compare the literary norm-systems of grade 12 students of two types of school in Edmonton, an "academic" and a "trades-oriented" one.

The Subproblems

The first subproblem is to determine whether the literary norm-systems of the two groups of students have distinct characteristics, while the second subproblem is to compare the literary norm-systems of these two groups.

Hypotheses

The first hypothesis is that the two groups of students have identifiably distinct literary tastes.

The second hypothesis is that if the literary norms of the two groups of students are compared the literary norm-system of students from the "academic" type of school would be qualitatively different than that of students from a "trades-oriented" type of school.

Delimitations

a) The study will not attempt to correlate literary judge-
    ment with academic performance.

b) The study will not examine the psychological dimension
    of literary judgement.

c) The study will use only 44 students.

d) The study will use only grade 12 students.

e) The study will use only students without known physical
    or mental disabilities.

The Definition of Terms

Literary Evaluation - is not simply the act of classi-
fying literary works into good and bad, beautiful and ugly,
or complex and simple, but rather is the process by which
the reader experiences a literary work.   The experience
of a literary text must not be confused with its interpre-
tation.   For the sake of clarifying the working definition
of the term "literary evaluation" the following passage
from N. Frye's article, "Context of literary evaluation", will
be adduced:

> The experience of literature is not
> criticism, just as religious experi-
> ence is not theology and mental exper-
> ience is not psychology.   In the
> experience of literature a great many
> things are felt, and can be said,
> which have no functional role to play
> in criticism. A student of literature
> may be aware of many things that he
> need not say as a critic,...[1]

Thus understood, the term "literary evaluation" will be used, in this study, interchangeably with terms such as "literary preference", "literary appreciation", "literary response" and "literary experience."

Literary Norm-system - is a set of criteria that a reader uses in evaluating a literary work.[2]

Indiana Literary Judgement Test - is the study R.T. Segers conducted at the Universities of Indiana and Yale.[3]

Academic School - any school whose curricular emphasis is on pure sciences and arts. This kind of school prepares students for entry into university.

Trades-oriented Schools - any school whose curricular emphasis is on technical subjects such as "hair dressing" and "motor vehicle mechanics". This kind of school prepares students for entry into specific job markets.

Assumptions

The first assumption is that literary value judgements are amenable to empirical investigation.

The second assumption is that the general philosophy behind a school curriculum has an influence on the quality of aesthetic education.

The third assumption is that literary norm-systems of groups of readers can be compared and contrasted on the basis of their quality.

The Significance of the Study

This study will give us an insight into the question of whether or not all high school students in Edmonton have an equal amount of access to the literary values of our time. It is also hoped that this study will provide us with a picture of the state of literary education in Edmonton. Furthermore, this study will be a modest contribution to the empirical study of literary judgement. Since there are very few empirical studies of literary judgement, any effort in this direction is worthwhile.

NOTES

[1] N. Frye, "Context of Literary Evaluation." in Problems of Literary Evaluation. ed. J. Strelka (University Park & London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1969), p.18.

[2] This term is used here in the same sense R.T. Segers uses it in the following work: R.T. Segers, The Evaluation of Literary Texts: An Experimental Investigation into Rationalizations of Value Judgements with Reference to Semiotics and Esthetics of Reception Studies in Semiotics, VOl. 22., (Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1978), pp. 62-68.

[3] Segers, Op. Cit.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The Empirical Study of Literary Evaluation: A Historical Overview

The history of the empirical study of literary evaluation can be traced back to the beginnings of experimental psychology. G.T. Fechner, who is considered the founder of experimental psychology, was fascinated by the general questions of aesthetic preference. In 1876, Fechner published the results of his research into the affective preferences of people.[1] Fechner sought to deduce the actual preferences of his subjects from their preferences for simple and abstract elements such as rectangles and vowel sounds. This approach to the study of aesthetic preference was actively pursued by scholars of aesthetics in both Europe and America during the early part of the Twentieth Century.[2] Nevertheless, the approach did elicit a lot of criticism from both its admirers and detractors. Perhaps, the most fair assessment of Fechner's methodology is that by E. Bullough. Bullough, who was himself an ardent believer in experimental aesthetics, had this to say about the work of the founder of experimental aesthetics:

> Fechner's experiments cannot be said
> to have yielded any very striking
> or illuminating positive results.
> The reasons of their failure are well

> known and are set out in every criti-
> cism, such as can be found in the
> above-mentioned work of Lalo.   The
> purely quantitative measurements, and
> the system of averages which he
> employed, were the direct consequences
> of the hedonistic principles on which
> he based his theory of Aesthetics
> in general. The search for the colour
> which the greatest number of persons
> prefer, the questions whether squares
> or oblongs are more generally liked,
> or what proportions of the arms of
> a cross meet with the widest approval,
> seem to us rather crude and naive.
> But posterity owes a great debt of
> gratitude to Fechner for having
> attacked these kinds of problems,
> even if the results showed that little
> progress could be hoped for in that
> direction.[3]

Notwithstanding his   methodological   errors,   Fech-

ner's greatest contribution to posterity lies in the fact

that he was the first aesthetician to have involved the

physical presence of people in the study of aesthetic

experience.   Before Fechner's study most of the studies

of aesthetic experience were purely speculative and

none of them had ever used the aesthetic experience of a

subject as a point of departure for its theoretical formu-

lations. Thus, even though Fechner did not explicitly deal

with literary preference, he can still be looked upon as

the man whose courage to take the whole study of aesthetics

into the empirical realm has been a source of inspiration

for the student of empirical literary appreciation.

Like most methodological approaches, Fechner's basic attitude was kept while at the same time giving rise to other approaches. The most notable off-shoot of Fechner's approach was a group of Einfuhlüngen - or Empathy-theories which reached their zenith between 1895 and 1905. The proponents of this methodology sought to deduce the general norms of aesthetic experience from their own introspective experience of aesthetic objects. They were preoccupied with the apprehension of the artist's Expression. Some of the scholars who indulged in these introspective exercises were V. Lee, A. Thompson and T. Lipps.[4] The experiments carried out within the framework of the Einfuhlüngen-theories did accentuate the idiosyncracies of the aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience cannot be adequately explained by generalizing from the experience of one individual. A more meaningful approach would have been one that took into account the experiences of many people. In all fairness it must, however, be added that the naiviety of the underlying assumptions of the Einfuhlüngen-theories must be understood in the context of the general level of empirical aesthetics' research of the time.

Subsequent to the rise of Einfuhlüngen-theories, and under the influence of trends in general psychology, a number of attempts at standardizing the measurement of aesthetic experience were made. It was at this stage in the history of the empirical study of aesthetic experience that

literary preference was addressed to as a specific area of inquiry. Of note are the researches of H. Carroll, and A. Abbott et. al. Carroll devised a number of tests for the measurement of prose appreciation in school students.[5] The Carroll Prose Appreciation Test depended "for its validity upon two criteria: first, source; second, expert opinion." Carroll defended his criteria by saying that:

> The assumption is made that a selection, representative of the art of Sigrid Undset, would be superior to a typical selection from a woodpulp magazine, or that a description from Tolstoi could easily be distinguished from one badly written by deliberate intent. To be sure, the passages are short; but a reader can, even in a few lines, discover an incorrectly used word, an inartistic combination of phrases, or a faulty selection of detail. If only a single note is flatted by a singer, the musician hears it; "errors," if they may be called such, in prose are not so noticeable, but is at least possible to make gross discriminations.[6]

With due credit to Carroll, there are, nevertheless, two significant errors that he commits in choosing his criteria. First of all, Carroll is wrong in assuming that one's preference for an excerpt of literary text necessarily means that one likes the whole work of which the excerpt is a part. An excerpt of a whole is not aesthetically equivalent to the whole. In other words an excerpt from Tolstoi's _Anna Karenina_, is not aesthetically equivalent to the aesthetic object known as _Anna Karenina_. Thus, a reader's judgement of the excerpt from the aforementioned novel is not representative of his

overall impression of the whole novel.[7]

Secondly, Carroll's assumption that expert value judge-ments are necessarily the best is uncritical. Expert value judgements simply reflect the conventional norms of the period during which the given experts participate in the literary life of a society.[8] It is also true that most of the time the expert opinion is highly influenced by the kind of literary school of thought to which the respect-ive expert subscribes. For example, a work that is con-sidered good by an existentialist literary scholar might be differently valued by a structuralist. How-ever, in saying all this one is not denigrating the opin-ions of literary experts; all that one is saying is that the experts'opinion should be used cautiously in construct-ing tests.

It might also be added that Carroll's conclusions were refuted by the findings of the research conducted by D. Schubert. Schubert had replicated The Carroll Prose Appreciation Test on retarded and superior readers. To his surprise, his findings were different from those that were obtained by Carroll.[9]

Like Carroll, Abbott and Trabue used the opinions of the literary experts uncritically in the construction of a standardized test for the measurement of students' apprec-iation of poetry. Nevertheless, unlike Carroll they did use whole works in the tasks presented to the subjects.

The educational psychologist's preoccupation with the idea of constructing timeless standardized tests for the measurement of literary appreciation has been decried by many scholars. This methodological approach has been criticized for its over-emphasis on statistical manipulations, and for creating the impression that the only valid empirical approach to the study of literary appreciation is one that relies heavily on statistical analysis.[10] While statistics can be an invaluable tool for the analysis of the literary experience, if used carefully, the use of it for the mere reason of appearing to be scientific, can lead to very naive and contrived conclusions.

Subsequent to the era in which the educational approach was in vogue, a trickling of empirical research inspired by reception aesthetics began to appear.[11] These empirical analyses of literary evaluation were a logical development of the central place that the reader occupied in the theoretical framework of reception aesthetics. The basic assumption of reception aesthetics is that literature is written to be read and, as such, the best way of explicating literature is by investigating the interaction between the literary text and the reader. This position, however, is not new in literary theory. In 1923, L.L. Schucking did expound a similar theoretical position. In his book, Soziologie der Literarischen Geschmacksbildung, Schucking assigned paramount significance to the explication of

literary taste in terms of the dynamic interaction of the taste of the various groups of a society.[12] The role of the reader in literary life was furthermore given prominence in R. Escarpit's <u>Sociologie de la litterature</u> - a work in which some of the modes of literary consumption were presented.[13] However, it is with the advent of reception aesthetics that metatheory is grafted to the empirical study of the reader's reception of the literary text.

A case example of empirical reception studies is that by E. Frey. Frey set out to determine the role of literary training and linguistic competence in the process of literary evaluation. He administered excerpts of texts to a number of subjects. The investigation showed that language competence and literary training do, in fact, influence the quality of reader reactions and judgements. The research indicated also that consensus about the aesthetic quality of a text increases among people of a similar literary environment. One implication of Frey's conclusions is that there exists a shared set of literary criteria amongst people who participate in a common literary life. Another implication of Frey's deductions is that the set of literary criteria of a society can only be acquired through literary training. Interesting as Frey's findings might be, one cannot overlook the fact that he did use literary excerpts instead of whole works. Conclusions made on the basis of the readers' responses to distorted

aesthetic objects cannot be received without a grain of salt.

In a study by W. Bauer et al. an analysis of the affective elements of Paul Celan's short poem, "Faden-sonnen" was performed by administering a questionnaire to a total of 665 readers.[15] The aim of the first part of the questionnaire was to find out the expectation - horizon of the readers, while the second part sought to capture the readers' spontaneous response to the poem. Amongst other things, this team of scholars discerned three main lines of interpretation amongst the readers. The reader's choice of any of these appeared not to be acciden-tal, but correlated to psychological associations produced by him. These findings do confirm the fact that in spite of differences of literary judgement amongst readers there exists a shared set of literary values to which their divergent judgements can be reduced.

Empirical reception studies have inspired other approaches to the analysis of aesthetic evaluation, most notably the semiotic analysis of literary evaluation done by R.T. Segers.[16] Segers' theoretical paradigm has as its point of departure the main tenets of reception aes-thetics, but his study is more than a mere extension of reception aesthetics; it is an ambitious attempt at inte-grating reception aesthetics with semiotics for the purpose

of devising an adequate model for the analysis of literary evaluation. Segers' aim was to determine the system of norms that students of literature use in evaluating literary texts. He carried out his research on students and professors of literature at the Universities of Indianna and Yale. The results of the research indicated that the readers investigated shared a common norm-system which was characterized by three factors, i.e, novelty, design, and impact. The first fctor comprises the criteria of language, originality, excitement, and interest. The second factor comprises the criteria of plot, theme, and structure. The third factor comprises the items of emotion, believability, characterization, involvement and tempo.[17] Of these three factors, the novelty factor was found to be the most important, followed by the two other factors which have equal significance. Seger's work is perhaps the single most important work on the subjct of literary evaluation. For a theoretical framework Segers utilises such relevant theories as reception aesthetics, communication theory, semiotics, Prague structuralism, and value theory. In terms of methodology, Segers borrows and improves upon some methodologies of the Social Sciences, and creates a whole new methodology uniquely adapted to the study of the phenomenon of literary evaluation.

Having emerged initially as part and parcel of general empirical aesthetics, the study of literary evaluation is slowly isolating its own problems from the morass of the preoccupations of general aesthetics. Nevertheless, as important as the task of attempting to provide solutions to problems, is the question of grounding the studies of literary evaluation in theoretical structures which stand on the cumulative contribution of literary theory as well as on the theoretical ideas advanced by such disciplines as value theory and educational psychology.

Curricular Approaches to the Study of Literary Evaluation: A Historical Overview

Perhaps, the earliest investigation of the relationship between curriculum and literary judgement is the one published by E. Smith, and R. Tyler in 1942. The study was undertaken to determine whether or not the so called "progressive education" had had an influence on the students' aesthetic attitudes and interests. The study employed three appreciation questionnaires: the novel questionnaire the drama questionnaire, and the questionnaire on voluntary reading.[18] However, the aim of the project was not so much to investigate the constituents of the norm-systems of the student, but rather to measure the effectiveness of a particular teaching methodology. Since the publication

of this study, a number of curricular studies pertaining to literary evaluation have been undertaken; however, most of these studies, with the exception of one, focus on what the teacher does in the teaching of literature, rather than on the nature of the literary norms of the students.

The exception to the rule mentioned above is R.E. Tylor's work of 1962.[19] She set out to compare the effect of literary courses and that of topical courses on the quality of literary interpretation, reading comprehension, and literary appreciation. The study showed "that high school literary type courses produced higher scores in literary interpretation than did topical courses, but no significant difference in reading comprehension or literary appreciation (taste)."[20] The above mentioned experiment is of great relevance to the present study in so far as it asks almost the same question as one of the two questions asked by this study i.e.: are there differences in the degree to which different types of curicula facilitate the acquisition of literary values? It is in an attempt to answer this question that a comparative investigation of the literary norm-systems engendered by two differing curricular will be undertaken.

However, before discussing issues pertaining to

methodology and the analysis of data, a theoretical ration-
ale in the spirit of which this study was carried out will
be presented.

NOTES

[1] G.T. Fechner, <u>Vorschule der Ästhetik</u> (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1876).

[2] E. Bullough, "Recent Work in Experimental Aesthetics," <u>British Journal of Psychology</u>, 12 (1921), 76-77.

[3] Ibid., p. 77.

[4] Ibid., pp. 76-79.

[5] H. Carroll, "A Standardized Test of Prose Appreciation for Senior High School Pupils," <u>Journal of Educational Psychology</u>, 23 (1932), 402-403.

[6] Ibid., pp. 402-403.

[7] This position is corroborated by that of T. Munro - see T. Munro, <u>Toward Science in Aesthetics: Selected Essays</u>, (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1956), p.53.

[8] A.C. Purves and R. Beach, <u>Literature and the Reader</u> (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1972), p.7.

[9] Ibid., p. 10.

[10] Ibid., p.7.

[11] Most of the early empirico-analytical reception studies were done in West Germany.

[12] L.L. Schucking, <u>Soziologie der literarischen Geschmacks-bildung</u> (Bern and Munich: Francke, 1923).

[13] R. Escarpit, <u>Sociologie de la Litterature</u>, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958).

[14] E. Frey, "What is Good Style? Reader Reactions to German Text Samples," <u>Modern Language Journal</u>, 56 (1972), 310-23.

[15] W. Bauer et al., <u>Text und Rezeption: Wirkunganalyse Zeit-genössischer Lyrik am Beispiel des Gedichtes 'Fadensonnen' von Paul Celan</u> (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1972).

[16] R.T. Segers, <u>The Evaluation of Literary Texts</u> (Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1978).

[17] Ibid., pp. 145-146.

[18]Purves et al., <u>Op. Cit.</u>, pp. 152-53.

[19]R.E. Tylor, "A Comparison of the outcome of Two instructional Arrangements in High School Literature: The Topical Unit and the Literary Types," Diss. Indiana University, 1962.

[20]This is a paraphrase from Purves et al. <u>Op. Cit.</u>, p. 153.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the present chapter, the theoretical framework under whose rubrics the empirical study has been conducted will be elaborated. The need for grounding empirical studies of literature on explicit theoretical foundations has been voiced by a number of scholars, including R.T. Segers and S.J. Schmidt.[1] The elucidation of one's theoretical point of departure, highlights the underlying assumptions and the specific field of enquiry of a study. Even the very aim of the enquiry gets clarified by such an endeavor. This kind of clarity must be sought if the empirical study of literature is to achieve the status of what Schmidt calls "a rational science."[2]

For the purposes of this study, two theoretical issues are of paramount significance; the concept of "literature" and the concept of "literary evaluation." The main sources of the theoretical position taken in this study are as follows: sociology, the sociology of literature, reception aesthetics, semiotics, communication theory, information theory and axiology.

THE CONCEPT OF LITERATURE

On first thought, a discussion of the concept of literature might seem a superficial exercise in theoretical gymnastics; however, when one considers the fact that the term "literature" does not mean the same thing to everyone, one might appreciate an explanation of the sense in which the word is used in the present study. Maria Corti's comment on the problematic nature of the term "literature" might further elucidate what is being said here:

> In every study, the vantage point
> from which the object of that study
> is considered is the operative choice
> of the critic. That choice makes
> certain forms of enquiry more per-
> tinent than others, which would
> be valid from another perspective.
> This statement, however, is less
> self-evident than it seems, because
> no object of study is clear from
> the beginning; it becomes so only
> gradually, as one passes to various
> levels of inquiry. Take, for
> example, the notion of literature
> which is in daily use, but is thorny
> as a mountain thistle. If in 1947
> Sartre's question "what is litera-
> ture?" seemed insidious, the question
> posed by Todorov at the first Con-
> gress of the I.A.S.S. (1974) was
> even more so: "Does literature
> exist?" Someone is actually casting
> doubt on the object, as if we were
> dealing with a collective ghost
> from which it would be opportune
> to liberate ourselves. Another
> critic, Zamjatin, who is also a
> writer, does not doubt the object
> but rather the possibility of des-
> cribing it: there is an Indian
> fable, he says, in which "some blind
> people were asked to feel an

> elephant and describe what it seemed
> to resemble." One felt an ear and
> said; a rope. Another felt a hoof
> and said: a smooth column. A third
> felt the trunk and said; a sausage.
> Moral: "This is the destiny of
> the majority of critics. Literature
> is too vast a fact to be embraced
> in its totality."[3]

It is thus, imperative that one provide the sense in which one is using the term literature. However, in adopting a definition of literature one must avoid the kind of extreme subjectivity that is evident in the descriptions of the elephant which the blind men provided. One must take into account the relevant views of others in arriving at a definition of an object.

Taking into account the postulations of sociology, semiotics, sociology of literature, reception aesthetics, communication theory and information theory, the term "literature" will be understood as a <u>social institution which is constituted by the dialectical process of production, reproduction, distribution and consumption of texts which have been socially designated and accepted as possessing some literary value</u>.

Of course, the view that literature is a social institution is not new in literary scholarship; scholars such as S.J. Schmidt have belaboured this point before. Nevertheless, the criteria upon which literature is often accorded the status of a social <u>institution</u> are conceived

haphazardly. For example, Schmidt's view that literature is a social institution because it is a subset of social communication in general, merely describes a feature that literature holds in common with other social institutions[4]. Moreover, this criterion is not one of the sufficient conditions which a social phenomenon must satisfy in order to qualify as a social institution. In dealing with questions regarding the sociological status of literature in the context of the social system, literary scholars would do better by consulting the criteria advanced by sociologists. This is necessary because to name literature "a social institution." is necessarily to put literature on par with the rest of the social institutions which exist in society.

In the present study, the status of literature as a social institution is justified on the basis of two criteria advanced by sociologists. The first criterion, advanced by G. Ferraro and B. Larkin, defines a social institution as "an established custom or practice found in human societies."[5] On the basis of this criterion literature qualifies for the status of a "social institution." Literature is, indeed, one of the most established customs or practices of human society. It is present in all forms of human societies, regardless of the differences in social organization; and level of economic development.

Secondly, literature can be considered a social institution on the basis of the "interactionistic" theory of social institutions. The criteria advanced by this approach are best summarized by R. Rowbottom in his work, <u>Social Analysis</u>, in which he defines social institutions as "all those general aspects of the interactions in any society, large or small, which endure beyond changes in individual membership."[6] The fact that literature is characterized by kinds of interaction which endure beyond changes in individual membership cannot be gainsaid. If for example, the triad: Author, Text and Reader, is taken as a representation of the basic constituents of the structure of literature, various forms of intra-institutional interaction can be noted and described. While the specific modes of interaction amongst these elements are always debatable, the fact still remains that there are within literature, enduring elements which are in a process of constant interaction, and which therefore define it as an institution on the basis of the "interactionistic" criteria.

Social institutions, are usually seen as responses to particular human needs. Ferraro and Larkin, for example, have provided the following set of five human needs and the corresponding social institutions to which they give rise:

a)   the need for food and protection (economic institution)

b)   the need to continue society (family institutions)

c)   the need to continue traditions, customs, values (educ-
     ational institutions)

d)   the need for order in the society (political institu-
     tions)

e)   the need for religion (religious institutions)[7]

If it were a question of fitting the literary institu-
tion into the above model, one would fit it within the
educational institution. Through literature, so it could
be said, man does perpetuate his traditions, customs and
values. Nevertheless, there is a lot of literature that
does not cater to man's need to continue his traditions,
customs, and values. There are texts that do not, at least
explicitly, inform us of the social contexts within which
they were produced.

Such texts are more significant for their aesthetic
stature rather than for their capability to inform about
society. One can accordingly argue that the human need
in response to which the institution of literature arises
is missing from the model provided by Ferraro and Larkin.
The sixth human need to which literature caters can be
called, in general terms, "the aesthetic need."

The "aesthetic need" can be defined as the need to
produce and consume objects which are products of man's
imagination, translated into linguistic and musical signs,

as well as into other materials such as clay, paint and canvas.

Turning to the second aspect of the definition of literature as a social institution, one notices, at once, that the elements: production, distribution and consumption do, in fact, delineate the main domains of social activity engaged in by those who participate in the institution of literature. Even though these categories are primarily used, by Marx and his followers, in reference to the working of the economic institution, they, nevertheless, serve the analysis of the institution of literature well by reducing the activities which obtain in literature to their bare basics. M. Nauman has succinctly summarized the dialectical relationship between literary production and consumption, in the following words:

> Production produces consumption insofar as it creates (a) the material, the object to be consumed; (b) by way of the object which is always a definite one, the manner of consumption; (c) the need for consumption, the urge to it, "the ability to consume," and thus a subject for the object. Marx gives as an example: "The object of art, as well as any other product, creates an artistic public, appreciative of beauty."
>
> But conversely, consumption also produces production, and does so inasmuch as it creates (a) the real product, for unlike a natural object, the object created by man only becomes a product when it has proved

> itself to be such in consumption:
> "the result of production is a pro-
> duct, not as the material embodiment
> of activity but only as an object
> for the active subject" (p.25);
> consumption creates (b) the need
> for new production, "the ideal,
> inwards, impelling cause which con-
> stitutes the prerequisite of produc-
> tion" (ibid), and thus "the dispos-
> ition of the producer" (p.26):
> It is clear that while production
> furnishes the material object of
> consumption, consumption provides
> the ideal object of production,
> as its image, its want, its impulse
> and its purpose." (p.25)[8]

However, mediating between production and consumption
is the sphere of distribution of goods. As Nauman des-
cribes it, this sphere "determines the individual's share
in the world of products."[9] Nevertheless, that which
is produced, and distributed for consumption is not without
function in the network of activities which take place
in the institution of literature. The literary product
does exert pressure on the manner of production as well
as that of consumption. For example a "tragedy" does
demand a particular mode of production, distribution and
consumption. The author of a "tragedy" must produce it
according to a certain set of rules and conventions that
govern the production of a "tragedy." The distribution
of a tragedy by ink and paper may not be enough since the
full value of a tragedy may only be given justice to, by
a theatre. A tragedy also imposes certain rules of con-
sumption on the part of the reader or audience. Thus,

the literary product is more than a lifeless object on a conveyor belt. The literary product dynamically participates in the interplay amongst various functionaries of the institution of literature.

All the same, one must admit that ultimately a product is assigned literary value not so much on the basis of its intrinsic aspects but rather on the basis of how it is used. One could say, with J. Mukarovsky, that "there are no objects or actions which, by virtue of their essence or organization would, regardless of time, place or the person evaluating them, possess an aesthetic function and others which, again by their very nature, would be necessarily immune to the aesthetic function."[10]

However, Mukarovsky has taken into account, as well, a very important feature of the literary product. In the following passage Mukarovsky recognizes the fact that some products have a higher tendency towards being aesthetic than others.

> But there are certain pre-conditions in the objective arrangement of an object (which bears the aesthetic function) which facilitates the rise of aesthetic pleasure.[11]

Thus, the aesthetic value of a literary product is a function of both the aesthetic predisposition inherent in the object itself and the manner in which the object is perceived and used by the society. However, the final arbiter in matters involving the aesthetic status of products is society.

One may also take note of the fact that once the def-
inition of literature provided in this study is taken ser-
iously, atomistic definitions of literature appear inade-
quate. Thus definitions of literature which confine them-
selves to production, such as the romantic definition of
literature, can be seen to be excluding a lot that goes
into constituting the institution of literature.[12]   The
same could be said about the definitions of literature
provided by Formalism and New Critical theory whose view
of literature centers primarily on the formal and stylistic
properties of the literary text. Even attempts at trans-
cending the traditional concepts of literature have, some-
times, given a very slanted view of literature. In recep-
tion aesthetics, for example, one comes across definitions
of literature which are based solely on the role the reader
plays in the literary structure. Though such definitions
can be justified on the grounds that they force the prac-
tice of literary theory to recognize the significance of
the reader in the dynamics of literary processes - a fact
neglected by mainstream literary theory for a long time
- one must be on one's guard for an equally significant
error which reader-oriented definitions commit when they
assume that the total meaning of the phenomenon of litera-
ture can be adequately explicated in terms of the nature
and pattern of the reader's consumption of the literary
text.

Furthermore, the institutional view of literature does show that those theories of literature which are reconsiderations of the traditional views of literature (ie. reception and communication theories) are related to one another by virtue of the fact that they all focus on different features of the institution of literature. We shall conclude our survey of current institutional models of literature with a presentation of two communicative/ information models; those of R.J. Jacobson and U. Eco.

Basic to Jakobson's model is the triad: "sender," "message", and "addressee." Mediating between the "sender" and the "addressee" are the factors of: "context" of the message, and kinds of "contacts" available between the sender and the addressed. In dealing with a reader's evaluation of a text it is important to be conscious of the kind of contact that exists between him and the author, since author-reader contacts can influence the mode of text-processing and consequently that of text-evaluation. It is also imperative that the reader be aware of the context within which the message he is asked to receive has been sent. The context includes, such aspects of literary communication as generic codes and period codes. Any misunderstanding regarding such codes on the part of the reader can lead to wrong modes of text-consumption.

Related to studies which examine the communicational properties of literature, are those studies that ask specifically about the information aspect of the institution

of literature. These studies seek to understand the manner
in which the information structure of the institution of
literature functions. U. Eco's model provides an example
of the main orientation of the information approach to
the study of literature.[13] The poles of Eco's model are
the "source" and the "destination." The source generates
and "encodes" a message and converts it into signals which,
in turn, are transmitted through a "channel." The signals
are, however, received and decoded back into a message
at the point of destination. Translated into the literary
information structure, the "source" is often seen as rep-
resenting the author who encodes his message by remodelling
signals of natural language. The channel through which
the author's message gets transmitted to the reader is
the printed page. On receiving the signals, the reader
is required by convention to decode them by using the lit-
erary code. The whole concept of codes becomes problematic
when applied to literature since literary communication,
by its very nature, is polysemic. Without giving the mess-
age/text a privileged status, one can concur with
R. Ingarden and W. Iser that, imbedded in the message,
are certain "indeterminate" points which instruct the
reader about the appropriate code he can use in processing
the message or text.[14] Whether or not the real readers
do in fact, process literary texts in this manner cannot
be answered without recourse to empirical research. It

is in order to grasp the way real readers process literary texts that the present empirical study into the problem of literary evaluation has been undertaken.

However, there was need to clarify the notion of literature being employed in this study. The notion of literature in the framework of which the present study has been carried out is that literature is a social institution amongst other social institutions. As a social institution, literature possesses a multitude of properties each one of which forms a fertile field of inquiry (on the following page is Figure 1 which is a skeletal presentation of some of these inquiries in terms of the theory of literature as a social instition.).[15] The basic field of inquiry to which the present study is addressing itself is located on the activity structure of the literary institution. Well aware of the dialectical relationship between the various components of the literary activity-structure, the present study focusses on the problem of literary evaluation which is an aspect of the domain of text-consumption.

THE CONCEPT OF LITERARY EVALUATION

Literary evaluation exists within a matrix of activities in the domain of text-consumption. In the context of L.M. Rosenblatt's transactional view of literature, one can map out three cardinal activities which take place during text-consumption: reading, interpretation, and evaluation.[16] Nevertheless, these areas of activity must

LITERATURE AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

Structure of
Intra-Institutional   Text Production ——→ Text distribution ——→ Text concumption
Activity

Chain of   (Bookstore + Library)——→Reader
Role-Players   Author——→ publisher ——→ Book distributor

Communicational   Sender——→ message ——→ Contact ——→ Receiver + Perceiver
Structure   +   Context of Message
                               context

Information   Source ——→ message ——→ signal——→transmitter——→ channel ——→ signal ——→
Paths   +
                             Code

                       Receiver ——→ message ——→ destination
                                +
                              Code

not be understood as being neatly delineated from one
another - they exist in an active continuum within which
they inter-penetrate.

The primary confrontation is between a human reader
with all his socially and personally acquired idiosyn-
crasies, and "a set or series of signs interpretable as
linguistic symbols."[17] This set of signs with a capacity
to serve as symbols is referred to by Rosenblatt as "the
text." Furthermore, she locates the transaction between
the reader and the text on the level of reading.

In contradistinction to the concept of text, according
to Rosenblatt, is the concept of "Poem" which she defines
as follows:

> The poem, then must be thought of
> as an event in time. It is not
> an object or an ideal entity. It
> happens during a coming-together,
> a compenetration, of a reader and
> a text. The reader brings to the
> text his past experience and present
> personality. Under the magnitude
> of the ordered symbols of the text,
> he marshalls his resources and crys-
> tallizes out of the stuff of memory,
> thought and feeling a new order,
> experience, which he sees as the
> poem. This becomes part of the
> ongoing stream of his life experience,
> to be reflected on from any angle
> important to him as a human being.[18]

Though a reader may turn after evoking the poem, he
will still have participated in some minimal measure of
interpretation. Interpretation and evaluation are part
and parcel of the "aesthetic" reading of the text except

that they do not occupy a dominant position during the reading phase. The reader's attention during the reading phase of the text is centered more on decoding the ling- uistic signals and evoking from them the poem.

Once the poem has been evoked, the reader reflects on his experience. The act of glancing backward at the transaction between the reader and the literary work is the essence of the idea of interpretation. One could not describe this act better than the way Rosenblatt does in the following passage:

> Sometimes the backward glance simply registers a sense of having organ- ized and completed a sequence of experiences, of having reached a conclusion. Sometimes one is drawn into reflecting on what has been evoked in the effort to realize it more keenly, to arrive at a tighter organization, a firmer knit- ting-together of elements. For instance, one may search for a more satisfactory underlying connection among the various speeches or actions[19] of a character in a novel or play.

If the phenomenon of interpretation is understood in terms of the transactional relationship between the reader and the text, it can be granted to both the ordinary reader and the critic. Both the critic and the ordinary reader engage in interpretation with the sole difference that the critic has more tools for organizing his experience than the ordinary reader. The critic also has the social mandate of translating his experience with a text into a professional code, one that the ordinary reader may not

have access to unless he has had the privilege of being exposed to it through such institutions as the educational institution. Thus, Rosenblatt is correct in describing the ordinary reader as an "embryonic critic."[20]

Once the reader has evoked the poem and assigned it a certain interpretation, he can raise the question of whether or not the evoked and interpreted poem is aesthetically good or bad, likeable to unlikeable. However, the reader's judgement of a work is a summary of his "cumulative reponses to the emerging work." This judgement is usually made in the context of the reader's transaction with other texts as well as in the context of the stipulation of his society regarding "the satisfaction to be sought, the conventions to be observed, the qualities to be admired."[21] Thus, the literary judgements that readers pronounce on literary works are not merely groundless opinions, but are based on the system of norms which their societies have inculcated in them. However, this is true not only of literary value judgements; as current axiology informs us, value judgements in general are grounded on specific criteria. The rationale for a normative proposition is seen as a function of the subject's interaction with a certain norm system. Segers has diagrammatically summarized this activity as follows:[22]

Subject + Norm System⟶ Object⟶Normative Proposition

This diagram demonstrates as well that the nature of the normative proposition is not a product of the personal and social norms of the subject only but also of the unique nature of the object. The same holds true for the structure of the literary value judgement which has been constructed by Segers as follows:[23]

.Reader + Literary Norm Systems $\longrightarrow$ Text $\longrightarrow$ Literary Value judgement
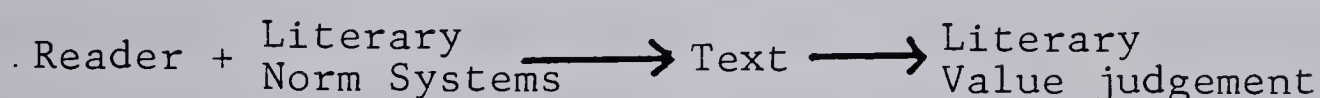
However, if one were to pay due respect to the role the reader's own idiosyncratic preferences play in constructing value judgements and if one were to recognize the ontological duality of the literary work, the above model would appear as follows:

Reader + Reader's system of literary norms + Social literary norms $\longrightarrow$ | Text / Poem | $\longrightarrow$ Literary judgements
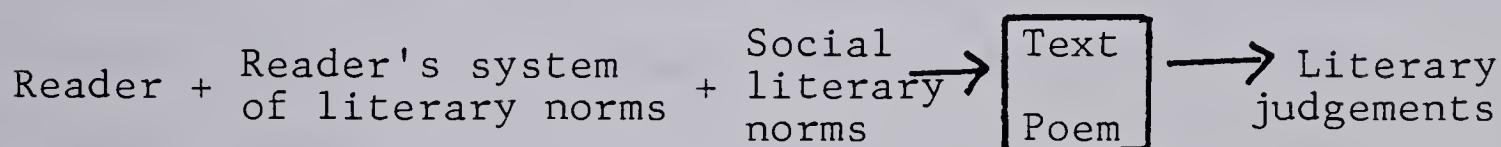
Thus, the term "reader" would stand for the human reader embodying all the non literary experiences he brings with him to the moment of evaluation. These experiences might include such things as his view of the world and his non-literary educational background. However, his personal canon of literary norms would be a reflection of the criteria produced by his space of individuality. It is in detecting these criteria that the help of the psychologist is more than needed. The reader is not just a social "person" judging his experience solely on the basis of social norms – he is more than that. The complex

set of literary norms he brings with him to the event of constructing and evaluating the poem is a manifest inter-action of his very personal literary values and those he has acquired in the process of literary socialization.

The problem of the ontological duality of the literary work recognized by Mukarovsky and Rosenblatt also has implications for the theory of literary evaluation.[24] The act of evaluation cannot simply be seen as being per-formed on the end product of the literary experience, but rather as a final resolution of a process begun right at the inception of the literary experience. Literary evalu-ation is thus a tying-up-together of several moments of evaluation which take place during the whole time the reader engages in a transactive relationship with the literary text.

However, while according the personal literary norm system its due significance at the theoretical level, in carrying out the empirical study only the social literary norms were investigated. The reason for this being the fact that the reader's system of personal norms is so tied up with the inner terrain of the reader that one felt that without the relevant background in psychology, the inves-tigation of these norms would be crudely done. Neverthe-less, there is still a lot of work to be done on the social literary norms. There is need to investigate the mechan-isms of norm distribution in terms of the extent to which

they facilitate the individual's acquisition of norms. One can also raise questions about the constituents of the norm systems of various sub-groups of readers.

The sub-group of readers chosen for this study is that of grade twelve high-school students. This is a very interesting group of readers in the sense that they are at the end of a general literary education and about to enter a more specialized literary education at the university. Since the university absorbs very few of these readers, one can safely assume that the majority of the ordinary readers earlier talked about fall within this class of readers. Therefore, if the aim is to understand the manner in which the ordinary reader participates in the consumption of literary works, this sub-group of readers will provide a suitable sample on the basis of which one can generalize about certain aspects of the ordinary or general reader's manner of text-consumption. It is also true, at least theoretically, that by the time a student is in grade twelve, he will have been exposed to a sufficient quantity and quality of literary norms to enable him to pass for a "competent reader." However, A. Popovic has discounted the possibility that high school students can be competent readers.[25] On the basis of his reader-typology, which classifies readers into the categories of: "naive", "sentimental", and "discursive", he has included high school students into the category of sentimental readers.

Popovic's typology reflects a concern for the idea of "aesthetic distance" and he accords greater value to an aesthetic reading performed with maximum "aesthetic distance".[26]   It would appear, however, that Popovic's typology is more relevant to the act of interpretation than evaluation. His naive reader is one who identifies the reality of the text with concrete reality, and the sentimental reader is one who identifies his private life with that of the hero. Popovic attaches greater value to the "discursive reader" who, he says, pays attention to all the communicational features of the text. It would seem that Popovic's "discursive reader" is a literary critic with a scientific approach to the aesthetic experience. Certainly, high school students cannot be expected to be as sophisticated as Popovic's "discursive reader". Nonetheless, they can be expected to have acquired the basic ingredients of the literary value system of present-day society. Thus, high school students can qualify as minimal competent readers.

As in other sub-groups of readers there are, among high school students, factors which militate against the uniform distribution of literary values. In this study, "differential curricular emphasis" is being investigated as a factor in the process of distributing literary values. It has been hypothesized that greater literary competence is expected of students at an "academic" school than of

the students at a "trades-oriented" school, since at an "academic" school literature is taught to every student as an "essential component" of the program, whereas it is not taught as such at the "trades-oriented" school". However, the results of the empirical study will confirm or reject the above hypothesis. Meanwhile, the question of how one goes about investigating literary value judgement has to be tackled.

FOOTNOTES

[1]   See: S.J. Schmidt, "Receptional Problems with contemporary Narrative Texts and Some of Their Reasons," Poetics, 9, No. 1 (1980), 119-146.   R.T. Segers, The Evaluation of Literary Texts, Studies in Semiotics, Vol. 22 (Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1978).

[2]   See S.J. Schmidt, "On a Theoretical Basis for a Rational Science of Literature." A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature. (1976), 239-264.   In this article Schmidt argues that for literature to be considered a rational science, it must delineate its field of inquiry, determine its metatheoretical framework and devise a sound scientific methodology.

[3]   See M. Corti, An Introduction to Literary Semiotics, trans. M. Bogat and A. Mandelbaum, Advances in Semiotics Series, ed. T.A. Sebeok (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1978), p. ix.

[4]   S.J. Schmidt, "Empirische Literaturwissenschaft as Perspective," Poetics, 8, No. 6 (1979), 562-563.

[5]   G. Ferraro and B. Larkin, The Invisible Castle: Institutions: A Concept Study (New York: Macmillan, 1975), p.4

[6]   R. Rowbottom, Social Analysis: A Collaborative method of gaining Usable Scientific Knowledge of Social Institutions (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1977), p.25.

[7]   Ferraro and Larkin, Op. Cit., p.16

[8]   M. Nauman, "Literary Production and Reception," New Literary History, 8, No. 1 (1976), 108

[9]   Ibid. p. 108

[10]   J. Makarovsky, Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts, trans. M.E. Suino (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1970), pp. 1-2.

[11]   Ibid. p.28

[12] L.M. Rosenblatt, The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), p.2. In the above work, Rosenblatt takes note of the fact that Romanticism excluded the factor of text-consumption in its definition of literature. The following passage taken from definition 2 of the same book summarizes Rosenblatt's view on the romantic definition of literature.

> ... toward the end of the eighteenth century, the poet, the author, emerges into effulgent visibility. In the post-Lockean philosophic climate, with the warning of confidence in an ordered reality behind the world of appearances, the emphasis shifts to the poet and the poet's sensibility. Both Wordsworth and Coleridge, for example, find the question, what is poetry? practically interchangeable with the question, what is a poet?

[13] For a survey of reception aesthetics, see P.U. Hohendahl, "Introduction to Reception Aesthetics," trans. M. Siberman, New German Critique, 4, No. 10 (1977), 29-63. For the information approach see U. Eco, A Theory of Semiotics Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 33. For the communicational model attributed to Jakobson, see R. Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," in Style in Language, ed. T.A. Sebeok (New York and London: M.I.T. Press and Wiley) 1960, pp. 350-370.

[14] See W. Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach," New Literary History, 3, No. 2(1972), 279-299.

[15] In this diagram some of the models have been trimmed of certain features. For example, the concept of "noise" has been left out of Eco's model because it is already subsumed in the concept of Channel. The concern here is with the basic skeleton of the models.

[16] Rosenblatt, Op. Cit.

[17] Ibid., p.12

[18] Ibid., p.12

[19] Ibid., p.133-134

20 Ibid., p.138

21 Ibid., p.152

22 Segers, Op. Cit., p.60

23 Ibid., p.63

24 Rosenblatt, in the work referred to already, divides the literary work into the "text" ie. "signs interpreted as linguistic symbols", and the "poem", the event caused by transaction between a reader and a literary work. However, this duality was anticipated by Mukarovsky in his work already referred to. He divides the literary work into the "artifact" (signifiant) and the "aesthetic object" (signifié). The former is the "material" aspect of the literary work whereas the latter is the "expression and correlate of the artifact in the consciousness of the perceiver" (Mukarovsky op. cit. p.90). See also D.W. Fokkema and E. Kunne-Ibsch, Theories of Literature in the Twentieth Century: Structuralism, Marxism, Aesthetics of Reception, Semiotics (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1978) p.31.

25 Notes the present author took during a conversation with A. Popovic of the Nitra School of Literary Criticism, in Czechoslovakia.

26 The concept of "aesthetic distance" has been postulated as a necessary attitude, on the part of the subject, if the subject is to have an aesthetic experience of the aesthetic object he is interacting with. This concept appears to have its root in Kants' idea of "disinterestedness" or "purposiveness without purpose" as a necessary precondition for a satisfactory aesthetic experience. Bullough, building on the same concepts, has narrowed the concept of "aesthetic distance" to "psychical distance." [See E. Bullough, Aesthetics: Lectures, ed. E.M. Wilkinson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957) pp. 91-130]. Popovic's categorization of readers into naive, sentimental and discursive which rates highly the "detached" reader and lowly the extremely involved reader is in essence championing the concept of "aesthetic distance" or "psychical distance."

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

According to Segers, there are two basic approaches
to the study of literary values?[1] the deductive and the
inductive.   The deductive approach involves the construc-
tion of the reader's literary value judgement on the basis
of his evaluative criteria.   However, before deducing the
literary value judgement of a reader, the criteria them-
selves are derived from the reader's explicit norms.   The
following diagram provided by Segers gives the essence
of the deductive model:

Literary   Literary   Literary
  Norm ————————> Evaluation ————————> Judgement
                     Criteria
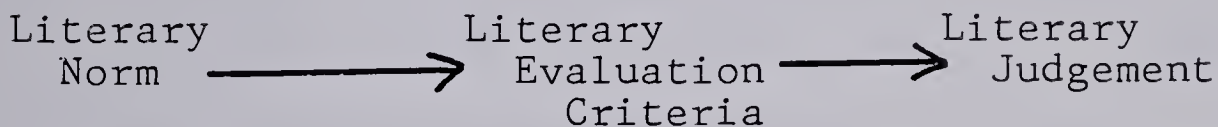
The inductive approach, begins with the literary value
judgement(s) of a reader from it (them) elicits the liter-
ary criteria.   From the derived criteria, the researcher
then infers the literary values that determine the reader's
literary value judgements.   Segers has provided the
following diagram as a summary of the inductive approach
to literary axiology.

Literary Value   Literary   Literary
  Judgement ————————> Evaluation ————————> Norm System
                          Criteria
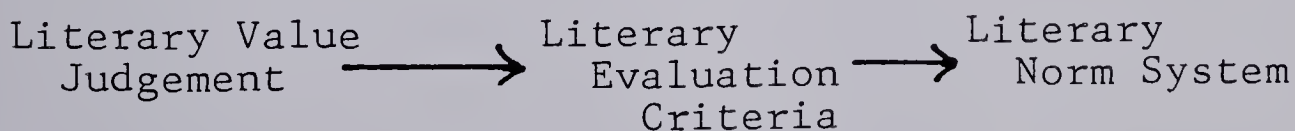
Since the aim of this study is to investigate literary value judgements as well as their underlying norm-systems, and since neither the literary value judgements of the readers nor their norms were known prior to the study, the inductive approach was adopted as more suitable. It was proposed, therefore, that the study begin by eliciting the reader's value judgements, from which their norms would later be derived.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research was designed to answer the following questions:

a) do the literary judgements of students from the two distinct groups of readers differ? (The groups to be looked at are sex and school groups).

b) what literary criteria do they use in judging literature and, specifically, the short story?

c) of the criteria employed, which ones predominantly influence the judgements of:

    i) each group?

    ii) the whole population?

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The design employed in the study is a 2 x 2 x 2 factor design ie:

2 sexes - boys and girls

2 schools - "Trades" and Academic

2 subtests - test A and test B.

Presented diagramatically, the above design appears as follows:

| | SUBJECTS | | INSTRUMENT | |
	BOYS	GIRLS	TEST A	TEST B
SCHOOL A	B1 ⟍ 6	G1 ⟍ 16	Q1.1 ⟍ 20	Q1.1 ⟍ 20
SCHOOL B	B ⟍ 22	G17 ⟍ 22	Q1.1 ⟍ 20	Q1.1 ⟍ 20

INSTRUMENT

There were two subtests administered, each with 21 questions. The first test consisted of a short story entitled "The Secret in My Engagement Ring" and a questionnaire. "The Secret in My Engagement Ring" by an anonymous writer was taken, by Segers, from True Romance, November 1974, p.7. The second test consisted of the same questionnaire and the short story "Just Lather, That's All" by Hernando Téllez.[2] The Second test was designed to measure the subject's ability to recognize a

short story that belongs, according to current canons, to the belles-lettres. The test was supposed to find out also about the rationalizations for the subject's evaluation of the short story, "Just Lather, That's All."

The first test, on the other hand, was designed to measure the subject's ability to recognize a short story that would not belong, according to current literary canons, to the belles-lettres. This test was also designed to elicit the criteria upon which the short story, "The Secret in My Engagement Ring" was rated. (See Appendix for the full test booklet).

Each test took approximately thirty minutes, thus making the combined testing time approximately 60 minutes.

The test used in the present study had been picked from the Indiana Literary Judgement Test. However, certain modifications were made to the test after a pilot study on first year students taking Comparative Literature 201 at the University of Alberta. Only questionnaire C of the Indiana battery was adopted and the short story, "The Secret in My Engagement Ring". The short story, "Just Lather That's All," was included in the test by the present researcher in consultation with the supervisor and a high school teacher. In some cases the questions in the questionnaire were rephrased for clarity and accessibility to

high school readers.

SUBJECTS

The population for the present study consists of all grade twelve students in Edmonton who attend "trades-oriented" and academic high schools. The sample, however, was obtained from Old Scona (A) Academic High School and Victoria Composite High School (B). Both the schools and the subjects were randomly selected. The population statistics are as follows:

Old Scona - 6 boys, 16 girls

Victoria Composite - 16 boys, 6 girls

Total number for each sex = 22 boys, 22 girls

Total for all subjects = 44.

PROCEDURE

The request to do research in the Edmonton public schools was channeled to the Edmonton School Board through the Field Services office of the University of Alberta. The Board granted the request and sent copies of the permission to the principals of the two schools which had been selected. Each school was requested to provide thirty students. The principals were then contacted by the researcher so that arrangements could be made to administer the tests. It was arranged that the tests be administered in May, 1982.

The first group of students to be tested was that from Scona. The principal asked for thirty volunteers. The volunteers assembled in one classroom. The following week the students at Victoria Composite were tested. The students who took the test were from one class chosen by the Head of the English Department and also those who were free at the time the test was being administered. All the subjects were assembled in one classroom.

In the test room, in both schools, the subjects were seated two at a desk. Once the students were seated, the researcher introduced himself by name and stated what he was doing at the University of Alberta. He told the subjects that he was about to hand out a booklet to them which contained two short stories and questionnaires and that they should record their responses to the two short stories on the questionnaires following the short stories. He further went on to assure the subjects that similar questions had been administered to groups of readers like them and that there were no right and wrong responses - they should record what they really felt about the stories. The subjects were also told that their work was not going to be shown to their teachers and therefore they should not think that the execise would affect their school grades.

The test booklets were then distributed to all the subjects and once each one of them had a copy of the booklet,

the following instructions were given to them:

> Please fill out the cover page of
> the booklet. Read carefully through
> the first short story and then com-
> plete the questionnaire following
> it. Do the same for the second
> short story. Please begin by answer-
> ing the first part of the question-
> naires. Should you have questions
> please raise your hand and I will
> come to your desk. You should not
> discuss anything with your friends.
> When you have finished, put up your
> hand and I will come around to pick
> up your booklet. You can now start
> working.

After the test had been administered, the subjects were thanked for their patience.

In order to have 22 subjects from each school the researcher randomly picked out 22 test booklets from the 30 booklets obtained from each school.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data was scored by the researcher and key-punched by the key-punching office of the Computing Services of the University of Alberta. Once the data had been entered into the computer, the Statistical Consultants of the Computing Services at the University of Alberta were contracted to analyse the data. The specific statistical computations to which the data was subjected will be presented, together with the results, in the following chapter.

[1] R.T. Segers, The Evaluation of Literary Texts, Studies in Semiotics, Vol. 22 (Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1978). pp. 63-68.

[2] Hernando Téllez's short story is an internationally recognized short story.

[3] Comparative Literature 201 is an introductory course to world masterpieces. This course is usually taken by first year university students. Since the permission to do research amongst high school students had not yet been granted at the time the pilot study was to be carried out it was considered useful to administer the test to the students of Comparative Literature 201. It was thought that these students who had just come to university would provide a sample close enough to the actual sample. The story "Porcupines at the University," by Donald Barthelme which is included in the Indiana battery was discarded because it was not culturally accessible to Canadian students. Some of the questions in the questionnaire which raised problems of the university sample were revised for the high school sample.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the first part of this chapter, the results of the statistical analysis of the data, will be presented and in the second an attempt will be made at interpreting the results.

RESULTS

The data collected were analysed by computing the means of the two schools and sexes on the evaluation of the two short stories; and further analysis was done by using "independent t test" and "analysis of variance" (Anova). Later, an attempt was made, by using correlation matrix, to determine the correlation between overall evaluation and individual criterion. The results obtained are as follows:

Table 1

Means of the two schools on story I
("The Secret in my Engagement Ring")

	School A (Scona)	School B (Victoria)
Mean	4.71	4.30
Standard deviation	1.31	1.03

Table 2

Means for Story II

	School A	School B
Mean	6.09	5.76
Standard deviation	1.07	1.04

Means of the two sexes on story I:

Table 3

	Male	Female
Mean	4.32	4.68
Standard Deviation	0.95	1.36

Means of the two sexes on Story II:

Table 4

	Male	Female
Mean	5.71	6.14
Standard deviation	0.78	1.25

The results for the t test were as follows:

Table 5

Story I between two schools t=1.12 $P < 0.01$ not significant

Story I between two sexes t=0.99 $p < 0.01$ not significant

Story II between two schools t=1.02 $P < 0.01$ not significant

Story II between two sexes t=1.32 $P < 0.01$ not significant

The results of Anova were as follows:

Table 6

Story I between two schools F=1.61 P$<$ 0.01 not significant

Story I between two sexes F=2.06 P$<$0.01 not significant

Story II between two schools F=1.04 P$<$0.01 not significant

Story II between two sexes F=2.53 P$<$0.01 not significant

Correlation between evaluation and specific criterion
for School A (Scona):

Table 7

Question Number	Criteria Represented	Correlation with evaluation of short story	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.47
2	Setting	0.27	0.69
3	Language	0.77	0.65
4	Plot	0.29	0.62
5	Originality	0.76	0.39
6	Involvement	0.71	0.50
7	Narrative Technique	0.82	0.78
8	Characterization	0.79	0.16
9	Tempo	0.04	0.22
10	Complexity	0.63	0.34
11	Understandability	-0.09	0.63
12	Structure	0.65	0.58
13	Believability	0.75	0.22
14	Imagery	0.53	0.64
15	Content	0.68	0.49
16	Grippingness	0.72	0.53
17	Irony	0.45	0.07
18	Excitement	0.65	0.74
19	Form	0.67	0.68
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.61	0.75

Correlation between evaluation and specific criterion
for School B (Victoria)

Table 8

Question Number	Criteria Represented	Correlation with evaluation of Short Story	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.59	0.66
2	Setting	0.02	0.53
3	Language	0.33	0.49
4	Plot	0.46	0.75
5	Originality	0.00	0.66
6	Involvement	0.18	0.40
7	Narrative Technique	-0.09	0.73
8	Characterization	0.65	0.61
9	Tempo	-0.40	0.25
10	Complexity	-0.36	0.46
11	Understandability	0.30	0.46
12	Structure	-0.22	0.49
13	Believability	-0.08	0.73
14	Imagery	0.47	0.50
15	Content	0.32	0.65
16	Grippingness	0.47	0.72
17	Irony	-0.26	0.18
18	Excitement	-0.04	0.79
19	Form	0.12	0.38
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.06	0.25

Correlation between evaluation and
Specific criterion for males:

Table 9

Question Number	Criteria Represented	Correlation with evaluation of Short Story	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.40
2	Setting	0.07	0.28
3	Language	0.47	0.34
4	Plot	0.74	0.40
5	Originality	−0.12	0.27
6	Involvement	−0.08	−0.01
7	Narrative Technique	−0.31	0.53
8	Characterization	0.76	−0.18
9	Tempo	−0.51	−0.17
10	Complexity	−0.55	0.15
11	Understandability	0.71	0.47
12	Structure	−0.14	0.11
13	Believability	−0.05	0.06
14	Imagery	0.28	0.12
15	Content	0.01	0.41
16	Grippingness	0.14	0.48
17	Irony	−0.35	−0.14
18	Excitement	−0.20	0.59
19	Form	−0.17	−0.04
20	Intellectual Challenge	−0.12	−0.16

Correlation between evaluation and specific
criterion for the females:

Table 10

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Correlation with evaluation of Short Story	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.64	0.62
2	Setting	0.30	0.67
3	Language	0.57	0.71
4	Plot	0.21	0.79
5	Originality	0.77	0.67
6	Involvement	0.84	0.73
7	Narrative Technique	0.91	0.84
8	Characterization	0.70	0.61
9	Tempo	0.10	0.40
10	Complexity	0.75	0.56
11	Understandability	-0.22	0.69
12	Structure	0.62	0.71
13	Believability	0.63	0.63
14	Imagery	0.71	0.80
15	Content	0.80	0.65
16	Grippingness	0.88	0.69
17	Irony	0.53	0.28
18	Excitement	0.74	0.85
19	Form	0.79	0.72
20	Intellectual challenge	0.69	0.87

Correlation between evaluation and specfic
criterion for the whole sample:

Table 11

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Corelation with evaluation of Short Story	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.57
2	Setting	0.24	0.50
3	Language	0.54	0.57
4	Plot	0.39	0.68
5	Originality	0.39	0.55
6	Involvement	0.51	0.44
7	Narrative Technique	0.45	0.74
8	Characterization	0.70	0.38
9	Tempo	-0.04	0.27
10	Complexity	0.17	0.42
11	Understandability	0.17	0.50
12	Structure	0.33	0.53
13	Believability	0.35	0.46
14	Imagery	0.50	0.57
15	Content	0.53	0.55
16	Grippingness	0.62	0.63
17	Irony	0.16	0.16
18	Excitement	0.33	0.76
19	Form	0.49	0.54
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.39	0.50

The following tables present those criteria which had a negative correlation with overall evaluation of the short stories:

Table 12

Scona

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Negative Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
11	Understandability	−0.09	+
	−	+	

Table 13

Victoria

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Negative Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
7	Narrative Technique	−0.09	+
9	Tempo	−0.40	+
10	Complexity	−0.36	+
12	Structure	−0.22	+
13	Believability	−0.08	+
17	Irony	−0.26	+
18	Excitement	−0.04	+

Table 14

Males

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Negative Correlation with evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
5	Originality	-0.12	+
6	Involvement	-0.08	-0.01
7	Narrative Technique	-0.31	+
8	Characterization	+	-0.18
9	Tempo	-0.51	-0.17
10	Complexity	-0.55	+
12	Structure	-0.14	+
13	Believability	-0.05	+
17	Irony	-0.35	-0.14
18	Excitement	-0.20	+
19	Form	-0.17	-0.04
20	Intellectual Challenge	-0.12	-0.16

Table 15

Females

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Negative Correlation with evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
11	Understandability	-0.22	+
-	-	+	+

Table 16

Whole Sample

| Question Number | Criterion Represented | Negative Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story: | |
		I	II
9.	Tempo	-0.04	+
	–	+	+

The following tables present the criteria which had a positive correlation with the overall evaluation of the short stories:

Table 17

Scona

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Positive Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.47
2	Setting	0.27	0.69
3	Language	0.77	0.65
4	Plot	0.29	0.62
5	Originality	0.76	0.39
6	Involvement	0.71	0.50
7	Narrative Technique	0.82	0.78
8	Characterization	0.79	0.16
9	Tempo	0.04	0.22
10	Complexity	0.63	0.34
11	Understandability	—	0.63
12	Structure	0.65	0.58
13	Believability	0.75	0.22
14	Imagery	0.53	0.64
15	Content	0.68	0.49
16	Grippingness	0.72	0.53
17	Irony	0.45	0.07
18	Excitement	0.65	0.74
19	Form	0.67	0.68
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.61	0.75

Table 18

Victoria

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Positive Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.59	0.66
2	Setting	0.02	0.53
3	Language	0.33	0.49
4	Plot	0.46	0.75
5	Originality	0.00	0.66
6	Involvement	0.18	0.40
7	Narrative Technique	–	0.73
8	Characterization	0.65	0.61
9	Tempo	–	0.25
10	Complexity	–	0.46
11	Understandability	0.30	0.46
12	Structure	–	0.49
13	Believability	–	0.73
14	Imagery	0.47	0.50
15	Content	0.32	0.65
16	Grippingness	0.47	0.72
17	Irony	–	0.18
18	Excitement	–	0.79
19	Form	0.12	0.38
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.06	0.25

Table 19

Males

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Positive Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.40
2	Setting	0.07	0.28
3	Language	0.47	0.34
4	Plot	0.74	0.40
5	Originality	–	0.27
7	Narrative Technique	–	0.53
8	Characterization	0.76	–
10	Complexity	–	0.15
11	Understandability	0.71	0.47
12	Structure	–	0.11
13	Believability	–	0.06
14	Imagery	0.28	0.12
15	Content	0.01	0.41
16	Grippingness	0.14	0.48
18	Excitement	–	0.59

Table 20

Females

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Positive Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.64	0.62
2	Setting	0.30	0.67
3	Language	0.57	0.71
4	Plot	0.21	0.79
5	Originality	0.77	0.67
6	Involvement	0.84	0.73
7	Narrative Technique	0.91	0.84
8	Characterization	0.70	0.61
9	Tempo	0.10	0.40
10	Complexity	0.75	0.56
11	Understandability	–	0.69
12	Structure	0.62	0.71
13	Believability	0.63	0.63
14	Imagery	0.71	0.80
15	Content	0.80	0.65
16	Grippingness	0.88	0.69
17	Irony	0.53	0.28
18	Excitement	0.74	0.85
19	Form	0.79	0.72
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.69	0.87

Table 21

Whole Sample

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Positive Correlation With Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.57
2	Setting	0.24	0.50
3	Language	0.54	0.57
4	Plot	0.39	0.68
5	Originality	0.39	0.55
6	Involvement	0.51	0.44
7	Narrative Technique	0.45	0.74
8	Characterization	0.70	0.38
9	Tempo	–	0.27
10	Complexity	0.17	0.42
11	Understandability	0.17	0.50
12	Structure	0.33	0.53
13	Believability	0.35	0.46
14	Imagery	0.50	0.57
15	Content	0.53	0.55
16	Grippingness	0.62	0.63
17	Irony	0.16	0.16
18	Excitement	0.33	0.76
19	Form	0.49	0.54
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.39	0.50

The criteria whose correlation with the overall judgement was 0.5 and above were considered as dominant criteria. The following tables present the criteria which had a strong correlation with the overall evaluation of the short stories:

Table 22

Scona

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Strong Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	+
2	Setting	+	0.69
3	Language	0.77	0.65
4	Plot	+	0.62
5	Originality	0.76	+
6	Involvement	0.71	0.50
7	Narrative Technique	0.82	0.78
8	Characterization	0.79	+
10	Complexity	0.63	+
11	Understandability	+	0.63
12	Structure	0.65	0.58
13	Believability	0.75	+
14	Imagery	0.53	0.64
15	Content	0.68	+
16	Grippingness	0.72	0.53
18	Excitement	0.65	0.74
19	Form	0.67	0.68
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.61	0.75

Table 23

Victoria

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Strong Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.59	0.66
2	Setting	+	0.53
4	Plot	+	0.75
5	Originality	+	0.66
7	Narrative Technique	–	0.73
8	Characterization	0.65	0.61
13	Believability	–	0.73
14	Imagery	+	0.50
15	Content	+	0.65
16	Grippingness	+	0.72

Table 24

Males

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Strong Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	+
4	Plot	0.74	+
7	Narrative Technique	–	0.53
8	Characterization	0.76	–
11	Understandability	0.71	+
18	Excitement	–	0.59

Table 25

Females

Question Number	Criterion	Strong Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.64	0.62
2	Setting	+	0.67
3	Language	0.57	0.71
4	Plot	+	0.79
5	Originality	0.77	0.67
6	Involvement	0.84	0.73
7	Narrative Technique	0.91	0.84
8	Characterization	0.70	0.61
10	Complexity	0.75	0.56
11	Understandability	-	0.69
12	Structure	0.62	0.71
13	Believability	0.63	0.63
14	Imagery	0.71	0.80
15	Content	0.80	0.65
16	Grippingness	0.88	0.69
17	Irony	0.53	+
18	Excitement	0.74	0.85
19	Form	0.79	0.72
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.69	0.87

Table 26
Whole Sample

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Strong Correlation with Evaluation of Short Story:	
		I	II
1	Theme	0.60	0.57
2	Setting	+	0.50
3	Language	0.54	0.57
4	Plot	+	0.68
5	Originality	+	0.55
6	Involvement	0.51	+
7	Narrative Technique	+	0.74
8	Characterization	0.70	+
11	Understandability	+	0.50
12	Structure	+	0.53
14	Imagery	0.50	0.57
15	Content	0.53	0.55
16	Grippingness	0.62	0.63
18	Excitement	+	0.76
19	Form	+	0.54
20	Intellectual Challenge	+	0.50

Table 27

Scona

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Correlation between Criteria and Evaluation for both Stories combined
1	Theme	0.67
2	Setting	0.34
3	Language	0.80
4	Plot	0.47
5	Originality	0.71
6	Involvement	0.68
7	Narrative Technique	0.84
8	Characterization	0.61
9	Tempo	0.13
10	Complexity	0.65
11	Understandability	0.19
12	Structure	0.73
13	Believability	0.53
14	Imagery	0.67
15	Content	0.66
16	Grippingness	0.71
17	Irony	0.40
18	Excitement	0.77
19	Form	0.75
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.75

Table 28

Victoria

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Correlation between Criteria and Evaluation for both stories combined
1	Theme	0.63
2	Setting	0.55
3	Language	0.48
4	Plot	0.64
5	Originality	0.41
6	Involvement	0.47
7	Narrative Technique	0.45
8	Characterization	0.56
9	Tempo	-0.02
10	Complexity	0.25
11	Understandability	0.34
12	Structure	0.40
13	Believability	0.33
14	Imagery	0.61
15	Content	0.59
16	Grippingness	0.62
17	Irony	0.05
18	Excitement	0.55
19	Form	0.44
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.31

Table 29

Males

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Correlation Between Criteria and Evaluation for both stories combined
1	Theme	0.59
2	Setting	0.36
3	Language	0.58
4	Plot	0.60
5	Originality	0.13
6	Involvement	0.29
7	Narrative Technique	0.27
8	Characterization	0.37
9	Tempo	-0.17
10	Complexity	0.03
11	Understandability	0.46
12	Structure	0.25
13	Believability	0.09
14	Imagery	0.41
15	Content	0.42
16	Grippingness	0.42
17	Irony	-0.03
18	Excitement	0.42
19	Form	0.29
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.07

Table 30

Females

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Correlation between Criteria and Evaluation for both stories combined
1	Theme	0.71
2	Setting	0.46
3	Language	0.72
4	Plot	0.54
5	Originality	0.79
6	Involvement	0.81
7	Narrative Technique	0.89
8	Characterization	0.69
9	Tempo	0.19
10	Complexity	0.75
11	Understandability	0.13
12	Structure	0.75
13	Believability	0.64
14	Imagery	0.81
15	Content	0.75
16	Grippingness	0.81
17	Irony	0.46
18	Excitement	0.85
19	Form	0.80
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.83

Table 31

Whole Sample

Question Number	Criterion Represented	Correlation between Criteria and evaluation for both stories combined
1	Theme	0.66
2	Setting	0.42
3	Language	0.66
4	Plot	0.56
5	Originality	0.57
6	Involvement	0.58
7	Narrative Technique	0.67
8	Characterization	0.57
9	Tempo	0.10
10	Complexity	0.47
11	Understandability	0.29
12	Structure	0.58
13	Believability	0.43
14	Imagery	0.64
15	Content	0.62
16	Grippingness	0.67
17	Irony	0.27
18	Excitement	0.67
19	Form	0.63
20	Intellectual Challenge	0.56

DISCUSSION

The Schools

The means of both schools for short story I are not significantly different from each other (see Table 2). This would imply that this short story was accorded the same value rating by both schools.

The relationship between the two means also suggests that the two schools evaluated story I as a homogeneous group rather than as two distinct groups.

The means of both schools for short story II, similarly, are not significantly different from each other (see Table 2). This would imply that this short story was accorded the same value rating by both schools. The relationship between the two means also suggests that the two schools evaluated story II as a homogeneous group rather than as two distinct groups.

It is also noticeable that both schools rated story I lower than story II. which implies that both schools do have an aesthetic ability to discriminate appropriately between a short story that belongs to mass literature and one that belongs to the belles-lettres.

The t test statistic comparing the performance of the two schools on story I was not significant which may mean that both schools processed and evaluated story I in a similar manner. (For t test results, see table 5)

The t test statistic comparing the performance of the two schools on story II was not significant, which may imply that the two schools processed and evaluated story II in a similar manner.

The analysis of variance test also showed no significant differences between the performances of the two schools on both story I and story II which would imply that the two groups of students are, in fact similar. (For Anova results see Table 6).

Thus, the initial hypothesis that the two groups of students would differ in their ratings and evaluation of the two short stories has been refuted by the study.

Nevertheless, in terms of the manner in which the two groups employed the criteria in judging the two stories one can detect a few differences. In the evaluation of story I, Scona employed all criteria except "understandability", whereas Victoria employed all except, "narrative technique", "tempo", "complexity", "structure", "believability", "irony" and "excitement" (See Tables 12, 13, 17 and 18). The range of criteria employed by Scona was broader than that employed by Victoria. On the one hand, one can interpret the preceding observation as indicating that the readers from Scona are superior to those from Victoria, since the former's criteria base for the evaluation of the story in question is richer than that of the latter. On the other hand, one might say that the readers

from Victoria responded to the literary code of the story better than the readers from Scona. Having perceived the story as belonging to popular literature, the readers from Victoria considerably reduced the criteria on the basis of which they were going to judge the story, whereas the readers from Scona reduced their criteria very minimally. One does not wish to engage in excessive ad hoc reasoning. However, an attempt will be made to do justice to the findings.

It would appear, therefore, that the readers from Victoria adjusted their criteria in response to the literary code of the story, whereas the readers from Scona more or less used all the criteria available to them. Thus, the differential use of criteria in the evaluation of story I might be explained in terms of the degree to which the two groups responded to the literary code of the story rather than by taking recourse to the literary competence of the two groups.

In the evaluation of story II, both schools employed all the twenty criteria provided. There was an awareness in both groups that story II, which is more sophisticated than story I, demanded a wider range of criteria than story I. It would seem that the readers from Victoria were more aware of the contrast between the two stories than the readers from Scona. If one were to judge literary competence on the basis of the ability to adjust one's system of norms in response to the literary codes of the literary works under evaluation, one would rate the readers from

Victoria as being more competent than those from Scona.

When one compares the number of dominant criteria of the two schools, one gets, more or less, the same picture of the relationship between the two schools. In the evaluation of story I, Scona had more dominant criteria than Victoria. Scona had fifteen dominant criteria while Victoria had only two. This means that the evaluation of story I by readers from Scona was highly influenced and determined by the following fifteen criteria: theme, language, originality, involvement, narrative technique, characterization, complexity, structure, believability, imagery, content, grippingness, excitement, form, and intellectual challenge. The evaluation of story I by readers from Victoria was highly influenced and determined by the two criteria of theme and characterization. The tendency on the part of readers from Victoria to reduce the range of literary norms in the evaluation of story I, is once again visible when one examines the range of dominant criteria. There is still on the part of the readers from Scona a tendency to use a broad range of criteria in the evaluation of story I.

In the evaluation of story II, the readers from Victoria utilized less dominant criteria than the readers from Scona. The readers from Victoria had the following ten dominant criteria: theme, setting, plot, originality, narrative technique, characterization, believability,

imagery, content and grippingness. The readers from Scona employed the following twelve dominant criteria: setting language, plot, involvement, narrative techique, under- standability, structure, imagery, grippingness, excitement, form and intellectual challenge. (See tables, 22 and 23).

It is noticeable that the readers from Scona reduced their dominant criteria from fifteen, in the evaluation of story I to twelve, in their evaluation of story II while the readers from Victoria increased their set of dominant criteria by eight in their evaluation of story II. It is obvious that the readers from Victoria were more sensitive to literary class differences between the two stories than the readers from Scona whose strategy for the evaluation of a belle-lettre was narrower than the one they employed in their evaluation of a piece of "trivialiteratur."

A comparison of the norm systems of the two schools as revealed by the correlation between criteria and evalu- ation, for both stories combined, shows that the readers from Scona utilized all the criteria provided whereas the readers from Victoria excluded the criterion of "tempo" (see Tables 27 and 28). This would, therefore, indicate that the literary norm systems of the two schools are only slightly different. Nevertheless, in terms of highly probable range of criteria as gathered from the dominant criteria of the two norm systems, it would appear that

the two norm systems might in fact be very different.
Tables 27 and 28 respectively, record the number of domin-
ant criteria as fifteen for Scona and eight for Victoria.
The range of dominant criteria for the norm system of read-
ers from Scona includes theme, language, originality, in-
volvement, narrative technique, characterization, complex-
ity, structure, believability, imagery, content, gripping-
ness, excitement, form and intellectual challenge. The
range of dominant criteria for the norm system of the read-
ers from Victoria includes: theme, setting, plot, charact-
erization, imagery, content, grippingness and excitement.
However, the differences in the range of dominant criteria
of the two literary norm systems may be interpreted as
merely indicating differences in the hierarchical struc-
tures of two norm systems which are more or less the
same.

The Sexes

The means of both sexes for short Story I are not sig-
nificantly different from each other (see Table 3). This
would imply that short story I was accorded the same value
rating by both sexes. However, the standard deviations
show that the males evaluated the short story as a homog-
eneous group whereas there was greater diversity of opin-
ion amongst the females.

The means of both sexes for story II are not signifi-
cantly different from each other either. This would imply
that the short story in question was accorded the same

value rating by both the males and females. As in the evaluation of story I, in the evaluation of story II, the females displayed a greater diversity of opinion than the males. (For the means and standard deviations, see Table 4).

The two sexes were also in accord regarding the comparative worth of the two stories. Both sexes rated story I lower than story II, which demonstrates that both sexes do have the aesthetic ability to discriminate appropriately between a short story that belongs to the belleslettres, and one that belongs to "trivialiteratur."

The t test statistic comparing the performance of the two sexes on story I was not significant which may mean that both sexes processed and evaluated this short story in a similar manner. (For t test results, see Table 5).

The t test statistic comparing the performance of the two sexes on story II was not significant, which may imply that the two sexes processed and evaluated story II in a similar manner.

The analysis of variance test also showed no significant differences between the performances of the two sexes on both story I and II which would imply that the two sexes are, in fact, similar in their aesthetic sensibility. (For Anova results, see Table 6).

However, there are differences between the two sexes in regard to the use of criteria in their evaluations of

the two stories. In the evaluation of story I, the males only employed nine criteria whereas the females employed nineteen criteria. The females excluded "understand-ability" from the corpus of their literary norm system whereas the males excluded all but the following criteria: theme, setting, language, plot, characterization, under-standability, imagery, content, and grippingness.

By reducing the norm system considerably, the male readers seem to have allowed the literary code of the text to influence the composition of their norm system. This does not appear to have been true for the female readers, who employed almost the same norm system in the evalua-tion of story I as in the evaluation of story II.

In the evaluation of story II, the male readers em-ployed a norm system composed of fourteen criteria whereas the females employed a norm system with twenty criteria. There was a tendency in both sexes to expand their norm systems in their evaluation of story II; however this tend-ency is more manifest in the male sex than in the female sex. Thus, it would appear that the males were more sens-itive to the generic differences between the two stories than the females.

When one compares the number of dominant criteria of the norm system of both sexes for each of the stories, one finds out that the comparison between the two sexes is not as clear cut as the comparison of total norm sys-tem would suggest. The number of dominant literary

criteria for the males is reduced from four, in the evaluation of short story I to two, in the evaluation of short story story II, whereas the number of dominant criteria for the females is increased from sixteen, in the evaluation of short story I to eighteen in the evaluation of short story II. The above observation would indicate that males were genre-blind whereas the females were not. Nevertheless, the number of dominant literary criteria is not as relevant to present study as the total norm system on the basis of which the reader evaluates the work of literature.

A comparison of the norm systems of the two sexes as revealed by the correlation between criteria and evaluation, for both stories combined, shows that the females utilized all the twenty criteria provided whereas the males only utilized eighteen criteria. (see Tables 28 and 29). Thus, the two norm systems are, more or less, the same.

Whole Sample

Table 31, shows that the norm system of the whole sample is composed of all the twenty criteria represented in the questionnaire. Thus, one may conclude that high school students in Edmonton are as competent readers as the group of students Segers interviewed at the Universities of Yale and Indiana.

In the following chapter, the conclusions drawn from

the findings discussed in the present chapter will be presented together with some observations on the research implications of the present study.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study was conceived and carried out in the context of the view that literature is a social institution marked by a number of activities which engage its participants. The focus of the present study was on the activity of literary evaluation which is an aspect of the domain of text-consumption. In this chapter an attempt will be made to draw certain general conclusions from the results of the empirical research conducted. In addition to formulating conclusions, research problems which emanate from the present study will be mentioned.

Conclusions

The empirical study conducted suggests the following conclusions:

a)   there are no differences between students who attend academic schools and those who attend "trades oriented" schools, in terms of the ability to distinguish popular literature from belles-lettres.

b)   the students from the two types of school have a common norm system.

c)   the students from the "trades-oriented" type of schools are more sensitive to generic codes than students from the academic type of schools.

d)   high school students who attend academic and "trades-
     oriented" schools are competent readers ie. their norm
     system is equivalent to that of professional students
     of literature.

e)   sex is not a factor in terms of the high school stud-
     ents' ability to distinguish between a piece of "trivia-
     literatur" and a work that belongs to the belles-
     lettres.

f)   male and female high school students have a common
     norm system.

General as the above statements might sound, one must
bear in mind that they primarily refer to the student pop-
ulation examined in Edmonton.   One would have to be more
cautious in applying the results of the present study to
other student populations.   The present study has not only
provided certain insights into the problem of literary
evaluation, but also raised certain issues to which future
research might address itself.

Implications for Future Research

There are three issues which should be tackled in fut-
ure research.   The question of the relationship between
generic codes and literary evaluation should be investi-
gated empirically. Although the present study indicated
that differences in the perception of the existence of
generic code do not necessarily imply different literary
judgements, it would be enlightening if someone dealt

specifically with the whole question of the relationship between generic code and literary evaluation. "Just Lather, that's all," a story used in the present study was, originally, written in Spanish. Since a translation of a work is not aesthetically equivalent to the work itself, it might be interesting to investigate the relationship between literary evaluation and translation. Thirdly, it would be informative if someone undertook to investigate the relationship between "cultural context" and literary evaluation. Apropos, one might raise the question of whether or not works are rated lower or higher in cultural contexts other than those within which they were produced. One hopes that by trying to examine empirically issues as the ones presented above, the fog that surrounds the phenomenon of literary evaluation will gradually dissipate.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire seeks to find out your evaluation of two short stories. The short stories are included in the booklet. After reading each story, please fill out both section 1. and 11. of the questionnaire.

Before reading the short stories and filling out the evaluation sheets, please furnish the following information that might be important for the purposes of the research.

age: _____

sex: _____

school: _____

year in school: _____

community where you live: _____

(This questionnaire is intended for research purposes only, and will in no way be used by your teachers for grading or other purposes.)

STORY I

The Secret in My Engagement Ring

I sat at the kitchen table, the fan directing cool air over me. It was sultry hot, as it had been for days. Then I heard Ken's car entering the driveway. Quickly, I hid the pink and blue squares I was crocheting, brushed my damp hair into curls, and put on the new pale coral lipstick. Then I got out the tray of crackers and cheese dip, a can of beer for Ken and orange juice for me. I turned down the heat on the lamb rib stew for supper; this was the second time we'd had it this week but Ken didn't seem to mind. I guess he knew that even hamburger was too expensive for our slim budget. Then I put on the phony smile, as I'd been doing for days.

It's not easy to look happy when you're sick at heart. Something was happening to our marriage; what, I didn't know.

Was it me? I couldn't talk to Ken or tell him about the baby on the way. If he knew, that would only be another problem to face and he already had so many.

I twisted my wedding and my sapphire engagement ring over and over again, thinking about the plan simmering in my mind. Something had to happen soon. Time was running out for us. Money was going to play a big part in our lives. It would make or break our marriage.

As I listened, Ken's tired footsteps told me the same old story. Nothing had changed. His business machine repair shop was about to go under. He'd started out with great enthusiasm when we were first married. Then, month after month, there'd been more bills than income, and nearly everyone in Blanding Falls had refused us further credit.

I helped with Ken's office work. I cut down on food made over my old clothes, made shirts for Ken, and did everything else I could think of to save money. In my letters to Mom, I raved about our wonderful business. To my sister, Alice, I did the same. When Alice asked about a baby, "When am I going to be an aunt, Brenda?" I sent her a postcard view of Blanding Falls. "Wish you were here. All is great. Love. Your sister, Brenda".

There was the unspoken sympathy of my friends that hurt. Even Karen, my very best friend, thought I could have made a better marriage had I waited a bit. But it was Ken I loved, Ken I married - Kenneth Cole, son of a merchant seaman away for months at a time, raised by aunts and cousins.

Ken's mother had died when he was ten. Ken was good-looking, friendly, and far too easy-going to succeed in a business of his own, I thought, but didn't say that. My Ken was sweet and I loved him as dearly as when he'd first captured my heart. So he'd never set the world

on fire - so what?

As the pile of unpaid bills grew, I became frightened. I looked for part-time work, but there was little of that in Blanding Falls. Even if I could find a job, that would not solve my problem. Ken would know, then, that I had no faith in his ability to earn a living for us.

I was a good cook and I thought I could make bread, cookies and candies for one of the stores, or sell them from door to door. Of course, I knew Ken wouldn't go for that. He was stubborn that way. He would support his wife - or else.

Ken had put his car in the garage, and came into the kitchen. "Hi, darling!" he called, "what's doin'?"

I saw the unhappy expression in his eyes and my kiss was extra warm. If he would only put some pressure on his customers and prospective customers instead of just talking sports with them, I thought, then it wouldn't be the uptown salesman who always walked away with the best accounts.

"Did you have a good day, dear?" I asked brightly, my mind still busy with the idea I'd had all day. My heart raced as I thought of my engagement ring and just how I might spur Ken on to one final effort to save his business.

"Oh, a couple of small jobs came in, and a notice from International saying pay up or they want their equipment back. You know what that means, Brenda. I can't operate without equipment, and there just isn't any money. We've used every cent of savings and borrowed up to our eyebrows. Just don't know where to turn next. I just don't know."

"We won't starve, dear. You can always take a job at Whitaker's Hardware and we could pay up what we owe. I could even take a job." I tried to keep the dispair out of my voice. "It takes time to - to build up a business, Ken."

"If I just had a month more - I've several good prospects, but maybe I'd better go talk to Whitaker tomorrow."

"Maybe so, dear", I said trying not to care that Ken loved to dig into cranky typewriters and frozen adding machines. He'd be miserable working at Whitaker's, selling pipe, nails, nuts and bolts.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you, Brenda - I had a note from Dad. His ship's docked in Oakland and he's on his way here for a visit."

"Do you suppose he'd lend you some money to keep the business going?"

"Not Dad. He's never been able to save a dime. He's always been happy-go-lucky; in fact, he'll probably

borrow from us for his return fare."

After supper, I said carefully, "Could you save th business if you had a couple of hundred dollars cash, Ken?"

"You know I could!" His look was reproachful. "But why not mention a million? Where could we get that kind of money?"

I took off my engagement ring. "Pawn my sapphire ring, Ken."

"I - I couldn't do that, Brenda."

"Ken, you said a few hundred dollars would do it, and I believe you. I believe in you." Words I'd rehearsed over and over - for my baby's sake.

"When things are right, you can redeem it."

He picked up my ring and put it in his wallet. "Yes," he said, "I can always redeem it."

There was a gayer note around the house after Dad Cole arrived. He was bluff, hearty, and as lovable as Ken - and just as easy-going. All the time, though, I was worried about Ken, and even at night in bed, with the lights out, there were no confidences, no hint of what was uppermost in our minds. No talk about a baby ... I couldn't hide the fact I was pregnant much longer.

Next day, on my way home from the market, I met Mr. Dunn, who operated a secretarial school. "What's got into that husband of yours, Mrs. Cole? He's turned into

a regular demon," he grumbled. "I just don't know, I don't."

I made some remark and hurried on, chilly strings of fear lacing my stomach. I fussed with supper, worried about Ken. He was grinning when he came home, but he let Dad talk. After supper, I couldn't stand it any longer. "What did you do to make Mr. Dunn angry, dear? He acted like an old bear. I saw him downtown."

"Mr. Dunn? Nothing much, I've got something to show you." He pulled papers from his pocket and my heart sank at the pile of bills. "Look, Brenda." I saw the notations: Received payment on account. Credit extended. Paid in full. Ken had gotten the money. He'd succeeded in pawning my ring!

"What happened, Ken?" Dad asked.

"Oh, I just signed up a few of the big ones," he said casually, an eager, exultant note in his voice. "Had to high-pressure Dunn, but he came through with a monthly service contract on his school typewriters and adding machines."

Tears blurred my eyes. "I knew you could do it."

Ken gave me a big hug. "Here's your ring back, darling. I had it cleaned."

He hadn't tried to pawn my ring. I took a deep breath, I didn't want Ken to know that I'd known it was a phony since I'd tried to pawn it in Briggs, ten miles

south of Blanding Falls.

I'd never really believed it was his mother's ring, but something he'd picked up somewhere - a phony. As phony as I thought Ken was, and I felt miserable for putting him on the spot, asking him to "Save face". I was a phony too. I started to slip the ring on my finger when Dad's big hand stopped me.

There was a funny smile on his lips. He turned the ring in his hand. "It's right pretty, Brenda. Pretty as the day I give it to Martha." He turned to Ken. "It was your grandma's ring, Ken. She told me how your grandpa bought it from a shipmate who needed money to get home. They were on a freighter going through the Panama Canal when this fellow's son took sick. That's all past history, though. Mom loved the ring. It was her most prized possession." Dad wiped his eyes.

"I'm glad you told us about my ring, Dad," I said. "You don't know how much it means to me."

"Well, I'm happy you're wearing it now, Brenda, and when you and Ken have that baby you're carryin', well, I hope you'll pass the ring along."

"B-baby! What are you saying?" Ken was wild-eyed as he took me in his arms.

"Yeah, Kenny," Dad grinned. "I caught her making a baby blanket! Pink and blue. As to Brenda's ring, I don't know if it's a real sapphire or not, but it's

been a love token in our family for a long, long time".
He put the ring on my finger and gave me a big kiss.

I didn't believe a word Dad said. The ring was a phony, but I wasn't going to let on I knew. I never saw anyone as crazy happy as Ken. "A baby! You're - we're going to have a baby, Brenda?"

Dad laughed heartily. "What else?"

<u>EVALUATION SHEET   I</u>

1.   <u>Over-all Evaluation</u>

Please rate your over-all evaluation of this short story by encircling the appropriate "x".

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

 very bad   bad   good   very good

11.   <u>Evaluation on the basis of selected criteria</u>

Will you please answer the following twenty questions by encircling the appropriate "x".

1.   To what extent does this short story contain a major idea?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

2.   To what extent is the historical and geographical setting of the story familiar to you?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

3.   Does this short story use language in a skillful way?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

4.   To what extent are the events of the story well-organized?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

5. To what extent do you find the story original and refreshing?

```
        x       x       x       x       x       x       x
not at all      slightly        moderately      extremely
original        original        original        original
```

6. To what extent do you feel personal, emotional involvement in the characters and actions of this story?

```
        x       x       x       x       x       x       x
not at all      slightly        moderately      extremely
involved        involved        involved        involved
```

7. To what extent do you find the way the story is told skillful?

```
        x       x       x       x       x       x       x
not at all      slightly        moderately      extremely
skillful        skillful        skillful        skillful
```

8. To what extent do the characters of this short story look like or act like human beings?

```
        x       x       x       x       x       x       x
not at all      slightly        moderately      extremely
```

9. To what extent does this story move swiftly?

```
        x       x       x       x       x       x       x
very slow       fairly slow     fairly fast     very fast
```

10. To what extent is this short story complex; or to what extent is this short story simple?

```
        x       x       x       x       x       x       x
very simple     moderately              moderately      very complex
                simple                  complex
```

11. To what extent do you feel that you understand the meaning of the short story?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   thoroughly

12. To what extent does this short story have a good structure with all elements well-integrated?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

very poorly   not very   well   very well
structured   well structured structured   structured

13. To what extent do you find this story believable?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   moderately   moderately   very
believable   unbelievable   believable   believable

14. To what extent does this short story work through imagery?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   to a very high
                                          degree

15. To what extent does the subject matter of this story please you?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidely

16. How steadily does this short story hold your attention?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   somewhat   fairly   all the time
                  steadily   steadily

17. To what extent does this short story contain irony?

     x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   extremely

18. To what extent do you find this short story exciting?

     x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   extremely

19. To what extent do you like the formal characteristics (é.g. narrative technique and the prose style) of this short story?

     x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very much

20. To what extent to you feel this short story offers an intellectual challenge leading you to further analysis or reflection?

     x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   extremely
challenging   challenging   challenging   challenging

STORY II

Just Lather, That's All

He said nothing when he entered. I was passing the best of my razors back and forth on a strop. When I recognized him I started to tremble. But he didn't notice. Hoping to conceal my emotion, I continued sharpening the razor. I tested it on the meat of my thumb, and then held it up to the light. At that moment he took off the bullet-studded belt that his gun holster dangled from. He hung it up on a wall hook and placed his military cap over it. Then he turned to me, loosening the knot of his tie, and said. "It's hot as hell. Give me a shave." He sat in the chair.

I estimated he had a four-day beard. The four days taken up by the latest expedition in search of our troops. His face seemd reddened, burned by the sun. Carefully, I began to prepare the soap. I cut off a few slices, dropped them into the cup, mixed in a bit of warm water, and began to stir with the brush. Immediately the foam began to rise. "The other boys in the group should have this much beard, too," I continued stirring the lather.

"But we did all right, you know. We got the main ones. We brought back some dead, and we've got some others still alive. But pretty soon they'll all be dead."

"How many did you catch?" I asked.

"Fourteen. We had to go pretty deep into the wood to find them. But we'll get even. Not one of them comes out of this alive, not one."

He leaned back on the chair when he saw me with the lather-covered brush in my hand. I still had to put the sheet on him. No doubt about it, I was upset. I took a sheet out of a drawer and knotted it around my customer's neck. He wouldn't stop talking. He probably thought I was in sympathy with his party.

"The town must have learned a lesson from what we did the other day," he said.

"Yes," I replied, securing the knot at the base of his dark, sweaty neck.

"That was a fine show, eh?"

"Very good," I answered, turning back for the brush. The man closed his eyes with a gesture of fatigue and sat waiting for the cool caress of the soap. I had never had him so close to me. The day he ordered the whole town to file into the patio of the school to see the four rebels hanging there, I came face to face with him for an instant. But the sight of the mutilated bodies kept me from noticing the face of the man who had directed it all, the face I was now about to take into my hands. It was not an unpleasant face, certainly. And the beard, which made him seem a bit older than he was, didn't suit him badly at all. His name was Torres. Captain Torres.

A man of imagination, because who else would have thought of hanging the naked rebels and then holding target practice on certain parts of their bodies? I began to apply the first layer of soap. With his eyes closed, he continued. "Without any effort I could go straight to sleep," he said, "but there's plenty to do this afternoon." I stopped the lathering and asked with a feigned lack of interest: "A firing squad?" "Something like that, but a little slower." I got on with the job of lathering his beard. My hands started trembling again. The man could not possibly realize it, and this was in my favor. But I would have preferred that he hadn't come. It was likely that many of our faction had seen him enter. And an enemy under one's roof imposes certain conditions. I would be obliged to shave that beard like any other one, carefully, gently, like that of any customer, taking pains to see that no single pore emitted a drop of blood. Being careful to see that the little tufts of hair did not lead the blade astray. Seeing that his skin ended up clean, soft, and healthy, so that passing the back of my hand over it I couldn't feel a hair. Yes, I was secretly a rebel, but I was also a conscientious barber, and proud of the preciseness of my profession. And this four-day's growth of beard was a fitting challenge.

I took the razor, opened up the two protective arms, exposed the blade and began the job, from one of the

sideburns downward.   The razor responded beautifully.
His beard was inflexible and hard, not too long, but
thick.   Bit by bit the skin emerged.   The razor rasped
along, making its customary sound as fluffs of lather
mixed with bits of hair gathered along the blade.   I
paused a moment to clean it, then took up the strop again
to sharpen the razor, because I'm a barber who does things
properly.   The man, who had kept his eyes closed, opened
them now, removed one of his hands from under the sheet,
felt the spot on his face where the soap had been cleared
off, and said, "Come to the school today at six o'clock."
"The same thing as the other day?" I asked horrified.
"It could be better, " he replied.   "What do you plan
to do?"   "I don't know yet.   But we'll amuse ourselves."
Once more he leaned back and closed his eyes.   I approached
him with the razor poised.   "Do you plan to punish them
all?"   I ventured timidly.   "All."   The soap was drying
on his face.   I had to hurry.   In the mirror I looked
toward the street.   It was the same as ever: the grocery
store with two or three customers in it.   Then I glanced
at the clock: two-twenty in the afternoon.   The razor
continued on its downward stroke.   Now from the other
sideburn down.   A thick, blue beard.   He should have
let it grow like some poets or priests do.   It would
suit him well.   A lot of people wouldn't recognize him.
Much to his benefit, I thought, as I attempted to cover

the neck area smoothly. There, for sure, the razor had to be handled masterfully, since the hair, although softer, grew into little swirls. A curly beard. One of the tiny pores could be opened up and issue forth its pearl of blood. A good barber such as I prides himself on never allowing this to happen to a client. And this was a first-class client. How many of us had he ordered shot? How many of us had he ordered mutiliated? It was better not to think about it. Torres did not know that I was his enemy. He did not know it nor did the rest. It was a secret shared by very few, precisely so that I could inform the revolutionaries of what Torres was doing in the town and of what he was planning each time he undertook a rebel-hunting excursion. So it was going to be very difficult to explain that I had him right in my hands and let him go peacefully - alive and shaved.

The beard was now almost completely gone. He seemed younger, less burdened by years than when he had arrived. I suppose this always happens with men who visit barber shops. Under the stroke of my razor Torres was being rejuvenated - rejuvenated because I am a good barber, the best in the town, if I may say so. A little more lather here under his chin, on his Adam's apple, on this big vein. How hot it is getting! Torres must be sweating

as much as I.   But he is not afraid.   He is a calm man,
who is not even thinking about what he is going to do
with the prisoners this afternoon.   On the other hand,
I, with this razor in my hands, stroking and re-stroking
this skin, trying to keep blood from oozing from these
pores, can't even think clearly.   Damn him for coming,
because I'm a revolutionary and not a murderer.   And
how easy it would be to kill him.   And he deserves it.
Does he?   No!   What the devil!   No one deserves to have
someone else make the sacrifice of becoming a murderer.
What do you gain by it?   Nothing.   Others come along
and still others, and the first ones kill the second
ones and they the next ones and it goes on like this
until everything is a sea of blood.   I could cut his
throat just so, zip! zip!   I wouldn't give him time to
complain and since he has his eyes closed he wouldn't
see the glistening knife blade or my glistening eyes.
But I'm trembling like a real murderer.   Out of his neck
a gush of blood would spout onto the sheet, on the chair,
on my hands, on the floor.   I would have to close the
door.   And the blood would keep inching along the floor,
warm, ineradicable, uncontainable, until it reached the
street, like a little scarlet stream.   I'm sure that
one solid sroke, one deep incision, would prevent any
pain.   He wouldn't suffer.   But what would I do with
the body?   Where would I hide it?   I would have to flee,

leaving all I have behind, and take refuge far away, far, far away, but they would follow until they found me. "Captain Torres' murderer. He slit his throat while he was shaving him - a coward." And then on the other side. "The avenger of us all. A name to remember. (And here they would mention my name.)

And what of all this? Murderer or hero? My destiny depends on the edge of this blade. I can turn my hand a bit more, press a little harder on the razor, and sink it in. The skin would give way like silk, like rubber, like the strop. There is nothing more tender than human skin and the blood is always there, ready to pour forth. A blade like this doesn't fail. It is my best. But I don't want to be a murderer, no sir. You came to me for a shave. And I perform my work honorably..... I don't want blood on my hand. Just lather, that's all. You are an executioner and I am only a barber. Each person has his own place in the scheme of things. That's right. His own place.

Now his chin had been stroked clean and smooth. The man sat up and looked into the mirror. He rubbed his hands over his skin and felt it fresh, like new.

"Thanks," he said. He went to the hanger for his belt, pistol and cap. I must have been very pale; my shirt felt soaked. Torres finished adjusting the buckle, straightened his pistol in the holster and after automat- ically smoothing down his hair, he put on the cap. From

his pants pocket he took out several coins to pay me for my services. And he began to head toward the door. In the doorway he paused for a moment, and turning to me he said:

"They told me that you'd kill me. I came to find out. But killing isn't easy. You can take my word for it." And he headed on down the street.

EVALUATION SHEET II

1. Over-all Evaluation

Please rate your over-all evaluation of this short story by encircling the appropriate "x".

x   x   x   x   x   x   x

  very bad   bad   good   very good

11. Evaluation on the basis of selected criteria

Will you please answer the following twenty questions by encircling the appropriate "x".

1. To what extent does this short story contain a major idea?

x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

2. To what extent is the historical and geographical setting of the story familiar to you?

x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

3. Does this short story use language in a skillful way?

x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

4. To what extent are the events of the story well-organized?

x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidedly

5.   To what extent do you find the story original and refreshing?

```
     x       x       x       x        x       x        x
not at all      slightly       moderately     extremely
original        original       original       original
```

6.   To what extent do you feel personal, emotional involvement in the characters and actions of this story?

```
     x       x       x       x        x       x        x
not at all      slightly       moderately     extremely
involved        involved       involved       involved
```

7.   To what extent do you find the way the story is told skillful?

```
     x       x       x       x        x       x        x
not at all      slightly       moderately     extremely
skillful        skillful       skillful       skillful
```

8.   To what extent do the characters of this short story look like or act like human beings?

```
     x       x       x       x        x       x        x
not at all      slightly       moderately     extremely
```

9.   To what extent does this story move swiftly?

```
     x       x       x       x        x       x        x
very slow       fairly slow    fairly fast    very fast
```

10. To what extent is this short story complex; or to what extent is this short story simple?

```
     x       x       x       x        x       x        x
very simple     moderately          moderately     very complex
                simple              complex
```

11. To what extent do you feel that you understand the meaning of the short story?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   thoroughly

12. To what extent does this short story have a good structure with all elements well-integrated?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

very poorly   not very   well   very well

structured   well structured structured   structured

13. To what extent do you find this story believable?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   moderately   moderately   very

believable   unbelievable believable   believable

14. To what extent does this short story work through imagery?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   to a very high

                                      degree

15. To what extent does the subject matter of this story please you?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very decidely

16. How steadily does this short story hold your attention?

    x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   somewhat   fairly   all the time

                 steadily   steadily

17. To what extent does this short story contain irony?

   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   extremely

18. To what extent do you find this short story exciting?

   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   extremely

19. To what extent do you like the formal characteristics (e.g. narrative technique and the prose style) of this short story?

   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   very much

20. To what extent to you feel this short story offers an intellectual challenge leading you to further analysis or reflection?

   x   x   x   x   x   x   x

not at all   slightly   moderately   extremely
challenging   challenging   challenging   challenging